

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 191890
ORIGIN NODS-00

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /001 R

66011

DRAFTED BY:AF:KBRILL

APPROVED BY:AF:KBRILL AF

S/S-O:SRPVALERGA

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 191890

NODIS

FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY MOOSE

FOLLOWING REPEAT USUN NEW YORK 03026 ACTION SECSTATE JUL 27.

QUOTE: C O N F I D E N T I A L USUN NEW YORK 03026

NODIS

E.O. 11652:GDS

TAGS: PDEV, WA, SF

SUBJECT: NAMIBIA: CONVERSATIONS WITH BOTHA

1. SUMMARY: THE SECRETARY, FOREIGN MINISTER OWEN AND SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS JAMIESON MET, WITHOUT AIDES, WITH PIK BOTHA THE EVENING OF JULY 26 TO DISCUSS THE NAMIBIAN PROPOSALS. BOTHA KEPT HIS POSITION OPEN AND WILL CONSULT WITH HIS PRIME MINISTER TONIGHT. HE URGED THAT WE PROTECT HIM BY SAYING NOTHING PUBLICLY. END SUMMARY.

2. THE SECRETARY, OWEN AND JAMIESON PRESENTED TO BOTHA
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THE STATEMENT THE CONTACT GROUP PLANS TO MAKE IN THE SECURITY COUNCIL TO EXPLAIN THEIR POSITION ON THE ISSUE OF WALVIS BAY. BOTHA WENT OVER THE STATEMENT LINE BY LINE AND BACK OVER PORTIONS OF IT. HE DID NOT CRITICIZE ANY PARTICULAR PART OF IT, BUT HE CLEARLY WANTED THE WESTERN GROUP TO ABSTAIN. THE WESTERN FOREIGN MINISTERS EXPLAINED THAT THEY HAD FACED A DIFFICULT CHOICE: THEY COULD HAVE

ABSTAINED ON A RESOLUTION WHICH WOULD HAVE BEEN MUCH WORSE FROM SOUTH AFRICA'S POINT OF VIEW; OR THEY COULD AGREE TO SUPPORT THE CURRENT RESOLUTION AND USE THEIR OFFER OF SUPPORT TO GAIN CONCESSIONS IN SOUTH AFRICA'S FAVOR. THEY CHOSE THE SECOND ALTERNATIVE.

3. BOTHA EXPRESSED CONCERN ABOUT THE NUMBER AND COMPOSITION OF THE UN FORCE. HE IS DISTURBED THAT THE FIGURE OF 5000 UN TROOPS IS BEING USED PUBLICLY. HE URGES THAT ALL TALK OF NUMBERS AND COMPOSITION CEASE. HE WANTS THESE ISSUES TO APPEAR TO GROW OUT OF CONSULTATIONS BETWEEN THE SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE AND THE ADMINISTRATOR GENERAL.

4. BOTHA SAID, AND FOURIE CONFIRMED, THAT THE SOUTH AFRICANS WERE IMPRESSED WITH AHTISAARI, WHOM THEY MET DURING THEIR MEETING WITH WALDHEIM. ALSO CONTRIBUTING TO A GREATER SENSE OF CONFIDENCE WAS TELLING POINT MADE BY FOREIGN SECRETARY JAMIESON TO THE EFFECT THAT CANADA HAD BEEN ASKED TO PARTICIPATE IN UNTAG, AND IT WOULD REFUSE UNLESS THE COMPOSITION OF THE FORCE WAS SATISFACTORY TO THE PARTIES CONCERNED. IN OTHER WORDS, THE DECISION WAS NOT WALDHEIM'S ALONE.

5. BOTHA WILL BE TALKING TO VORSTER AT MIDNIGHT JULY 26.

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6. FOLLOWING MEETING WITH FOREIGN MINISTERS, BOTHA JOINED THE CONTACT GROUP FOR DRINKS. HE WAS JOVIAL, PLEASANT AND FRANK. HE STATED TO THE GERMAN AMBASSADOR THAT HE HAD TWO CHOICES: EITHER TO GET HIS INSTRUCTIONS CHANGED, OR TO LEAVE, BECAUSE THE WESTERN MEMBERS WERE PLANNING TO VOTE IN FAVOR OF THE WALVIS BAY RESOLUTION. HE COMMENTED THAT HE NOW HAD AN APPRECIATION OF GREEK TRAGEDY. SOME AFFAIRS WERE OUTSIDE THE HANDS OF THOSE WHO ATTEMPTED TO MANAGE THEM. WHEN THE GERMAN AMBASSADOR COMMENTED THAT THAT WAS TOO FATALISTIC A VIEW, BOTHA REPLIED THAT THE AFRIKAANER HAD TOO MUCH GERMAN BLOOD IN THEM TO FEEL OTHERWISE.

7. COMMENT: WE BELIEVE AN AGREEMENT CAN BE ACHIEVED, BUT WE ARE ON THE KNIFE'S EDGE. IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT WE HONOR BOTHA'S REQUEST AND AVOID STATEMENT OF OPTIMISM ABOUT THE NEGOTIATIONS NOW UNDER WAY. YOUNG

UNQUOTE VANCE

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: POLITICAL SETTLEMENT, CAT-B, DIPLOMATIC REPRESENTATIONS, UNSC RESOLUTIONS, INTERNATIONAL PEACEKEEPING FORCES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 29 jul 1978
Decaption Date: 20 Mar 2014
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978STATE191890
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: AF:KBRILL
Enclosure: REPEAT OF USUN NEW YORK 3026
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: N780006-0486
Format: TEL
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions:
Image Path:
ISecure: 2
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t1978075/aaaaaeil.tel
Line Count: 113
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: cde2f071-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ORIGIN NODS
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: NODIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: NODIS
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 27 apr 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1978661
Secure: LOCK1
Status: NATIVE
Subject: NAMIBIA: CONVERSATIONS WITH BOTHA
TAGS: PDEV, PORC, PDIP, WA, SF, CA, UK, US, UNSC, (VANCE, CYRUS R), (JAMIESON, DONALD), (BOTHA, PIETER WILLEMM), (OWEN, DAVID A L)
To: OUAGADOUGOU
Type: TE
vdkgvkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/cde2f071-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014

